

Bridge Races Against River

■ Decision To Proceed With Concrete Pour Proved Significant

MoDOT and contractor Traylor Brothers successfully completed the largest structural pour in Missouri history in early June. The Emerson Bridge construction had two very big days, and as it turns out, just in the nick of time.

Crews worked 48 consecutive hours beginning Saturday, June 2, pouring 19 million pounds of concrete and working to create the foundation of one of the two main towers supporting the bridge.

"Everything went very well," said MoDOT Senior Construction Inspector Rick Lamb. "We finished about 5 a.m. on Monday (June 4), even a little ahead of schedule."

Rain was not expected to affect the concrete pour because the concrete was actually being poured underwater. What was expected to affect the pour was the river stages. The pour was originally scheduled to take place a week later, however when MoDOT and Traylor Brothers saw the river stage predictions on Friday, June 1, they knew they had to act fast.

"We knew we could either start on Saturday, much sooner than expected, or wait for the river to rise and come back down, which could have delayed the pour for several weeks," Lamb said.

Everyone including local concrete suppliers Delta Concrete and McDonald Company were ready to proceed ahead of schedule.

"It's all about the people and their dedication," said MoDOT District Engineer Scott Meyer. "I am continually impressed with the professional, can-do attitude of our employees, Traylor Brothers and the local concrete companies.

"This milestone for the Emerson Bridge happened sooner than we expected," said Meyer, "however, it was a wonderful example of the great team work involved in this construction. Approximately 65 people and their families gave up their weekend with less than a day's notice and contributed to the largest structural pour in our state's history. We appreciate their hard work and dedication to this project."

Pictures below show that their dedication indeed kept construction on schedule. Only 10 days after the pour, the Mississippi had risen to nearly envelope the cofferdam. Look inside for more photos of the concrete pour.



Concrete filling 686 trucks was hauled to barges and transported to the middle of the Mississippi River. The concrete was the first concrete placed on bedrock at the bottom of the river.



The Cofferdam on June 2.



The Cofferdam on June 12.

An In-Depth Look:

Rick Lamb, Senior Construction Inspector



What do you say when given the opportunity to work on the largest transportation project in Southeast Missouri? For MoDOT Senior Construction Inspector Rick Lamb there was no question what the answer would be.

“MoDOT doesn’t do a lot of bridges this size or scale,” he said, “so, this was my chance to be part of it.”

And, how do you follow up?

“I imagine the next projects will be a bit of a letdown after the scope of this one, but I’ll be relieved when it’s complete,” he said.

Lamb, a 16-year MoDOT veteran, will definitely have some memories from the project.

“It is interesting when something you have no control over--the river in this case--plays such a major role in determining the progress of a project. It really makes everyone rethink things and look at items in different ways. And, it’s been rewarding seeing what people can accomplish if they are just given the chance,” he said.

The Concrete Pour In Pictures



The first of 686 concrete truck loads crossed the existing bridge at approximately 6:30 a.m. on June 2.



MoDOT took samples of the concrete to ensure they met standards.



The concrete was then loaded onto barges and transported to the Pier 3 cofferdam.



Cranes load the concrete into the cofferdam.



Approximately 19 million pounds of concrete was used to begin the foundation of Pier 3.



Emerson Bridge Update:

■ Distribution Cap Poured In Late July

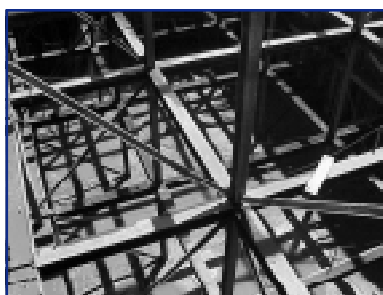
The largest structural pour in Missouri history isn’t the only construction information

with about 85 feet left to go.

Pier 3 -- The Mississippi River certainly tried to interfere with construction the last few months, but things seem to be getting better.

The contractor began pumping water out of the cofferdam in mid-July. A 28-hour concrete pour topped off the caisson

Pier 4 -- The cofferdam is complete on Pier 4 on the Illinois side. The contractor is installing and welding cutting edge sections on the sand island inside the cofferdam. The cutting edge is the bottom of the caisson, which, when filled with concrete, sinks into the bedrock forming the pier foundation.



Dewatered Pier 3 showing the supports in the cofferdam.

to report. Work continues on three piers of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge.

Pier 2 -- Concrete pours on the towers of Pier 2 on the Missouri side are progressing. The pours are scheduled for approximately every week

and created the distribution cap on which the footing and pier walls will be built. The cap was finished earlier this month and consisted of 1,900 cubic yards of concrete (7.2 million pounds).



Contractors continue working on Pier 2 on the Missouri side. Photo shows top of the pier looking north in Cape.



The Bridge *Beat* by Rep. Jo Ann Emerson

While roughly 14,000 vehicles cross over the Cape Girardeau Bridge each day, imagine that in just 15 short years the number will double — with 26,000 vehicles crossing the Mississippi River each day. This added traffic, and the current state of the Cape Girardeau Bridge, makes the construction of the new wider and safer Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge a welcome and necessary improvement for those living and working on the Southern Mississippi River.

My late husband,

Congressman Bill Emerson, recognized the need of building such a bridge because like many others living in the Heartland, he believed that as the region grew, we needed a structure that could safely and efficiently accommodate our travel needs. Additionally, he also felt a bridge that could handle the increased volume would provide the transportation infrastructure necessary to move products safely to the marketplace. For those reasons, he worked diligently with the United States Congress and

others in the state and national transportation agencies to secure the necessary federal funds to build the bridge.

Although the current Cape Girardeau Bridge was constructed in 1926, the structure no longer meets the needs of local residents. At only 20 feet wide, it creates several safety concerns and its weight limits restrict freight movement. The new bridge will provide 100 feet of decking, and four lanes of traffic — two going into Illinois and two going into Missouri — a vast improvement

over the narrow one-lane passage ways that currently exist.

Like Bill, I remain deeply committed to completing this bridge so that we can increase the vitality and prosperity of Southern Missouri and the Mississippi River region. I look forward to continuing my work with the Missouri Department of Transportation on the newest artery in our transportation future, and to celebrating with all of you at the grand opening of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge.

Emerson Bridge TV Show To Air In Aug.

A night of bridge entertainment is set for Aug. 21 on WSIU, Carbondale's PBS affiliate.

The Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge construction will be featured in a half-hour television show. MoDOT District Engineer Scott Meyer, HNTB bridge designer Steve Hague and Cape Girardeau Mayor Al Spradling III will be on hand to discuss the construction and the bridge's impact on the region.

The show will detail the Emerson Bridge design and history. Video of major milestones and construction up to this

point will also be featured. Meyer will explain the jet grouting

process and why it was necessary even though it delayed the bridge from its original schedule. Spradling will discuss what the bridge will mean for commerce and economic development in the Cape Girardeau area.

Bridge festivities will begin at 7 p.m., when the NOVA Superbridge documentary will air, followed by the Emerson Bridge program at 9 p.m. and the making of the Superbridge documentary at 9:30 p.m.



Planning Begins For The Big Day



MoDOT Public Affairs Manager Angie Wilson and Area Engineer Stan Johnson, left, met with Cape Chamber President John Mehner, Cape Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Terri Clark-Bauer and Chamber Special Projects Director Linda Minner to discuss plans for the grand opening celebration of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge.

A copy of the poster of the existing bridge's opening helped with ideas. The Emerson Bridge is expected to open in 2003. The Chamber and CVB are co-chairing the celebration and will be looking for volunteers to help in planning as the opening nears.

Fun Fact For Kids:

- The beams used to build the bridge weigh 15 million pounds.
- That is 3,157,894 gallons of ice cream!
- The beams are located under the road and make the bridge strong.

